You have been diagnosed with a concussion (also known as a mild traumatic brain injury). This personal plan is based on your symptoms and is designed to help speed your recovery. Your careful attention to it can also prevent further injury.

**Rest is the key.** You should not participate in any high risk activities (e.g., sports, physical education (PE), riding a bike, etc.) if you still have any of the symptoms below. It is important to limit activities that require a lot of thinking or concentration (homework, job-related activities), as this can also make your symptoms worse. If you no longer have any symptoms and believe that your concentration and thinking are back to normal, you can slowly and carefully return to your daily activities. Children and teenagers will need help from their parents, teachers, coaches, or athletic trainers to help monitor their recovery and return to activities.

### Today the following symptoms are present (circle or check).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Thinking</th>
<th>Emotional</th>
<th>Sleep</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headaches</td>
<td>Sensitivity to light</td>
<td>Feeling mentally foggy</td>
<td>Irritability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nausea</td>
<td>Sensitivity to noise</td>
<td>Problems concentrating</td>
<td>Sadness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatigue</td>
<td>Numbness/Tingling</td>
<td>Problems remembering</td>
<td>Feeling more emotional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual problems</td>
<td>Vomiting</td>
<td>Feeling more slowed down</td>
<td>Nervousness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance Problems</td>
<td>Dizziness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### RED FLAGS: Call your doctor or go to your emergency department if you suddenly experience any of the following

| Headaches that worsen | Look very drowsy, can't be awakened | Can't recognize people or places | Unusual behavior change |
| Seizures | Repeated vomiting | Increasing confusion | Increasing irritability |
| Neck pain | Slurred speech | Weakness or numbness in arms or legs | Loss of consciousness |

### Returning to Daily Activities

1. Get lots of rest. Be sure to get enough sleep at night- no late nights. Keep the same bedtime weekdays and weekends.
2. Take daytime naps or rest breaks when you feel tired or fatigued.
3. Limit physical activity as well as activities that require a lot of thinking or concentration. These activities can make symptoms worse.
   - Physical activity includes PE, sports practices, weight-training, running, exercising, heavy lifting, etc.
   - Thinking and concentration activities (e.g., homework, classwork load, job-related activity).
4. Drink lots of fluids and eat carbohydrates or protein to main appropriate blood sugar levels.
5. As symptoms decrease, you may begin to gradually return to your daily activities. If symptoms worsen or return, lessen your activities, then try again to increase your activities gradually.
6. During recovery, it is normal to feel frustrated and sad when you do not feel right and you can't be as active as usual.
7. Repeated evaluation of your symptoms is recommended to help guide recovery.

### Returning to Work

1. Planning to return to work should be based upon careful attention to symptoms and under the supervision of an appropriate health care professional.
2. Limiting the amount of work you do soon after your injury, may help speed your recovery. It is very important to get a lot of rest. You should also reduce your physical activity as well as activities that require a lot of thinking or concentration.
   - **Do not return to work. Return on (date)____________________.**
   - **Return to work with the following supports. Review on (date)____________________.**

### Schedule Considerations

- Shortened work day
- Allow for breaks when symptoms worsen
- Reduced task assignments and responsibilities

### Safety Considerations

- No driving
- No heavy lifting or working with machinery
- No heights due to possible dizziness, balance problems

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This form is part of the "Heads Up: Brain Injury in Your Practice" toolkit developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
Returning to Sports

1. **You should NEVER return to play if you still have ANY symptoms** – (Be sure that you do not have any symptoms at rest and while doing any physical activity and/or activities that require a lot of thinking or concentration.)
2. Be sure that the PE teacher, coach, and/or athletic trainer are aware of your injury and symptoms.
3. It is normal to feel frustrated, sad and even angry because you cannot return to sports right away. With any injury, a full recovery will reduce the chances of getting hurt again. It is better to miss one or two games than the whole season.

**The following are recommended at the present time:**

- ___ Do not return to PE class at this time
- ___ Return to PE class
- ___ Do not return to sports practices/games at this time
- ___ **Gradual** return to sports practices under the supervision of an appropriate health care provider.
  - Return to play should occur in **gradual steps** beginning with aerobic exercise only to increase your heart rate (e.g., stationary cycle); moving to increasing your heart rate with movement (e.g., running); then adding controlled contact if appropriate; and finally return to sports competition.
  - Pay careful attention to your symptoms and your thinking and concentration skills at each stage of activity. Move to the next level of activity only if you do not experience any symptoms at the each level. If your symptoms return, stop these activities and let your health care professional know. Once you have not experienced symptoms for a minimum of 24 hours and you receive permission from your health care professional, you should start again at the previous step of the return to play plan.

**Gradual Return to Play Plan**

1. No physical activity
2. Low levels of physical activity (i.e., *symptoms do not come back during or after the activity*). This includes walking, light jogging, light stationary biking, light weightlifting (lower weight, higher reps, no bench, no squat).
3. Moderate levels of physical activity with body/head movement. This includes moderate jogging, brief running, moderate-intensity stationary biking, moderate-intensity weightlifting (reduced time and/or reduced weight from your typical routine).
4. Heavy non-contact physical activity. This includes sprinting/running, high-intensity stationary biking, regular weightlifting routine, non-contact sport-specific drills (in 3 planes of movement).
5. Full contact in controlled practice.
6. Full contact in game play.

*Neuropsychological testing can provide valuable information to assist physicians with treatment planning, such as return to play decisions.*

This referral plan is based on today’s evaluation:

- ___ Return to this office. Date/Time
- ___ Refer to: Neurosurgery____ Neurology____ Sports Medicine____ Physiatrist____ Psychiatrist____ Other____
- ___ Refer for neuropsychological testing
- ___ Other

ACE Care Plan Completed by: ___________________________ MD  RN  NP  PhD  ATC

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